



**HIS MAJESTY KING MOHAMMED VI  
MAY GOD ASSIST HIM**



# **Full Text of HM the King's Message on Celebration of 50th Anniversary of Mehdi Ben Barka's Disappearance**

HM King Mohammed VI has sent a message to the participants in a meeting held, here Friday, on the occasion of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the disappearance of Mehdi Ben Barka.

Here follows the full text of this message, read out by Abderrahmane Youssoufi.

Praise be to God May peace and blessings be upon the Prophet, His Kith and Kin

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me pleasure to send you this message on the occasion of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the disappearance of Mehdi

Ben Barka.

First of all, let me say that he was a man of peace. He was also close to the royal family.

Although this fiftieth anniversary comes at a time when many questions remain unanswered, I wanted to take part in this commemoration, without complex or inhibition vis-à-vis this question, given the esteem in which I and the Moroccan people hold the deceased.

We should keep in mind that the post-independence era was teeming with all sorts of disruptions and strife concerning the course of action our newly independent country should embark on.

Let me point out, in this respect, that we are not here to pass judgment on anyone.

It is a fact, however, that the common concern of all Moroccans at that time in our history was to serve the common good, to ensure our country's progress and development and to defend its causes, each from their standpoint and personal convictions.

In any case, it is a fact that Ben Barka's name has gone down in history. There is no good or bad history; history is history: it is the memory of an entire people.

Having said that, we have to keep in mind that the enemies of our country have been exploiting this question to tarnish Morocco's image.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Nations build their destiny on their history, with its positive as well as its negatives aspects. Indeed, a people without history is a people without identity. It is also a people for whom there can be no future.

For this reason, there are lessons that should be learned from the Ben

Barka case. It should be used for the good of the nation; it should be leveraged to build, not to destroy.

In my address in 2004, on the occasion of the inauguration of the Justice and Reconciliation Commission, I stressed that Morocco never shied away from its past, nor intended to remain prisoner of its downsides. Rather, it sought to turn its past into a source of energy and inspiration – to make it a driving force behind our endeavors to build a modern, democratic society.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 1997, when I was still Crown Prince, the Abderrahim Bouabid Foundation sent me an invitation to take part in an international forum of democratic transition.

My revered father, His Late Majesty King Hassan II - may he rest in peace - advised me, at the time, to accept the invitation, which I did and I gave a speech at the conference.

Years later, here I am, addressing you again to stress that the monarchy was - and still is - deeply committed to cohesion between all components of our country, provided the nation's immutable values are respected. They are the same values for which many Moroccans, who were committed to freedom, including Mehdi Ben Barka, made the ultimate sacrifice.

In keeping with the sacred duties with which I am entrusted as Commander of the Faithful and King of the country, I shall spare no effort to preserve our nation's democratic choices, and to protect the rights and freedoms of Moroccans, as individuals and groups.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

History is not a mere recording of events as they occurred at a given point in time. History also involves the manner in which events are written down and the interpretation each one gives them, depending on their perception and standpoint.

What matters most, however, is that all Moroccans should fully identify with their history, with its ups and downs, in order to be able to live in a safe, stable environment today, and to set out to build a better future, with confidence and optimism.

Thank you.

Wassalamu alaikum warahmatullah wabarakatuh.

MAP 30 October 2015